

KNEE LIFT, TOUCH BACK, AND SQUEEZE

This exercise strengthens the hip extensor on the back side of the hip (gluteals) while stretching the hip flexors on the front of the hip—a very efficient way to train. Strong hip extensors enable participants to climb stairs and hills.

Benefits »

- ⦿ Strengthens hip muscles for everyday tasks.
- ⦿ Practices elements of balance and gait (one-legged standing, leg swings).
- ⦿ Provides temporary relief of sciatic pain for some participants.

Set It Up »

You will not need any special equipment for this exercise.

How to Do It »

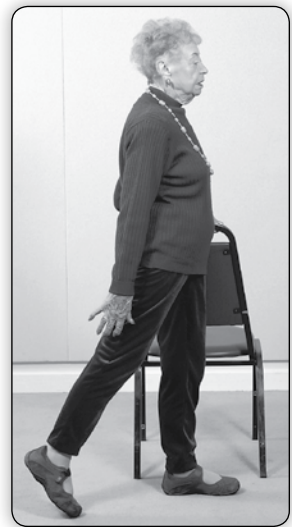
The Start

- ⦿ Participants should stand beside a handrail or chair. Standing beside the chair allows room for the leg-swing motion
- ⦿ Cue participants to stand tall with good posture (abs braced, knees soft, shoulder blades back and down, ribs lifted).

The Moves

Use the following cues.

- ⦿ Lift one knee upward (toward the chest) until you feel a stretch in the back of the leg (across the gluteal area).
- ⦿ Lower the knee and begin to extend the leg out behind until your toes touch down on the ground behind you and you feel a stretch in the hip flexors.
- ⦿ Tighten the gluteal muscles (buttocks).
 - Hold the position a moment. (Toes will still be on the ground behind them; the knee will be almost straight.)
 - Keep the supporting knee soft with a slight flexion.
- ⦿ Start with 6 repetitions and build to 10, with each leg.



Take It Further »

- ⦿ Increase repetitions until 15 can be done successively.
- ⦿ Hold the tightened position longer.

Give It More Balance »

- Lean slightly forward, and instead of touching the toe down behind, lift rear leg up a few inches and tighten gluteals.
- Hold lifted position a little longer.

Keep It Safe »

Make sure participants have adequate balance support while lifting their knee and swinging their leg back. Some may experience back pain when placing the leg behind them. Suggest that they lean forward a bit and keep their abdominals tight. If pain persists, discontinue.